

FOURTH GRADE HANDBOOK

VESTAVIA HILLS
ELEMENTARY
LIBERTY PARK

2007-2008

Goals for Fourth Graders

1. Students will learn independence and responsibility through departmentalized instruction.
2. Students will gain competency in writing to explain math concepts.
3. Students will gain competency in writing to demonstrate content knowledge.
4. Students will acquire knowledge of reading strategies and an appreciation for all literacy genres through interaction with texts.
5. Students will develop the ability to self-select appropriate literature in all genres.
6. Students will develop proficiency in using various types of graphic organizers and note-taking strategies.
7. Students will develop proficiency in basic math facts.
8. Students will use the writing process to compose samples of all three modes of writing in preparation for the 5th grade writing assessment.
9. Students will use character traits that will foster positive peer relationships.
10. Students will learn to set, monitor, and achieve individual goals.

Academic Areas

Morning Work

Your child will always have assignments to be done upon entering the classroom each morning. These assignments will include Arithmetic Developed Daily (A.D.D.), Daily Oral Language (D.O.L.), and Daily Analogies.

Handwriting

While it is understood that so much of a child's individuality goes into his/her handwriting, it is expected that each student write neatly and legibly. All written work will be taken into consideration in evaluating handwriting. Individual conferences will be held with students to identify areas that need improving. Handwriting will be judged in the following areas:

- ★ Forms letters correctly
- ★ Writes legibly
- ★ Uses appropriate letter spacing
- ★ Writes neatly

Reading

Your child will use the Scott Foresman Reading Program for textbook reading. Language and comprehension will be covered through silent and oral reading. Reading grades will be determined by oral reading performance, oral and written reading comprehension, skill lessons, and written assignments.

Your child will also be participating in the Accelerated Reading program this year. Your child will complete a reading inventory test which identifies his/her range or Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). This is the zone in which your child should be reading independently. The results from this test enable us to calculate the number of Accelerated Reader points your child should earn in a nine week grading period. Your child will be required to reach his/her goal as part of the nine weeks reading grade. All Accelerated Reader books should be within your child's ZPD. If your child reaches his/her Accelerated Reader goal for the nine week grading period, he/she will receive a '100' for a reading test grade. If your child does not reach the goal, the Accelerated Reader grade will reflect the percentage of the goal he/she attained. Also, the **average percent correct** on all quizzes during a goal period will count as a reading test grade. You will be apprised of your child's progress periodically throughout the nine week grading period.

Your child will have an opportunity each day for silent reading. Therefore, he/she will be required to have a book at school at all times.

Throughout the year, your child will share with the class some of the books he/she has read. Book sharing activities will be done in a variety of ways. You will be notified of each of these activities as they arise during the year.

Grading Scale for Reading:

Skill Activities/Daily Work 33.3%

Tests 66.7%

Language

Your child will use the McGraw-Hill English program. Students are expected to write clear and coherent sentences using proper punctuation and capitalization. Your child's grade will be determined by his/her performance on class assignments, daily written work, homework, and test results.

Also, your child will learn writing strategies in the narrative, descriptive, and expository modes. We will reinforce and continue the writing strategies introduced in all content areas.

Spelling skills will be included in your child's language grade. Your child will have spelling homework each night and a test each Friday unless otherwise notified.

Grading Scale for Language:

Language 50%

-Classwork 20%

-Quizzes 80%

Spelling 50%

-Homework 50%

-Tests 50%

Mathematics

Your child will use Scott Foresman mathematics. The student's grade will be determined by chapter tests, math drills and quizzes, class assignments, and homework. Fourth Grade areas of concern are:

- ★ Basic Facts-Place Value
- ★ Adding, Subtracting, Multiplying Whole Numbers
- ★ Dividing One- and Two-Digit Numbers
- ★ Fractions-Adding and Subtracting
- ★ Decimals-Adding and Subtracting
- ★ Data and Probability
- ★ Perimeter and Area of Figures

Please be aware of the above areas of study and assist your child on drilling the basic facts whenever possible.

Grading Scale for Math:
Homework/Classwork 17%
Quizzes 33%
Tests 50%

Social Studies

Our fourth grade social studies curriculum about life in Alabama yesterday and today is packed with history and drama. Students will use Scott Foresman Social Studies. The units of study for the fourth grade will cover the following areas:

- ★ Geography of Alabama
- ★ Native American Cultures in Alabama
- ★ European Exploration and Settlement in Alabama
- ★ Alabama's entry into Statehood/Government
- ★ Alabama in 19th Century
- ★ Alabama and the Civil War
- ★ Reconstruction in Alabama
- ★ Alabama and World War I
- ★ Alabama and the Great Depression
- ★ Alabama and World War II
- ★ The Civil Rights Movement in Alabama
- ★ Alabama in the 20th and 21st Centuries

Grading Scale for Social Studies:
Classwork 20%
Quizzes 30%
Section Tests 50%

Science

Our fourth grade science curriculum focuses on three main areas of science through hands-on experiments, observation, and discussion. Science is a wonderful avenue for promoting higher-order thinking. The units of study for the fourth grade will cover the following areas:

- ★ Life Science: Living Things and Ecosystems
- ★ Earth Science: Earth's Surface, Weather & Space
- ★ Physical Science: Matter and Energy, Forces and Motion

Grading Scale for Science:
Classwork 20%
Quizzes 30%
Section Tests 50%

Snacks

A time is designated for snack each day. All snacks and treats need to be healthy ones. The first ingredient should not be sugar or high fructose corn syrup. Children are allowed to have a bottle of water at school to drink during the day.

Take-Home Folders

Each Thursday, your child will take home a folder containing classwork, homework, tests, and a weekly progress report. It is your child's responsibility to return the folder by Thursday. It is only necessary to sign the weekly progress report, but please return the entire packet of papers. The weekly progress report enables us to keep open communication between the home and the school. Therefore, you will constantly be aware of your child's achievement and can share in his/her accomplishments. We will do our best to keep you informed of your child's progress throughout the year.

Classroom Discipline Procedures

Order in the classroom is necessary to maintain a productive learning environment. Our class participates in a positive reinforcement system. A token will be given each day your child exhibits exemplary behavior and completes all classwork and homework assignments. Your child will save these tokens during the week to buy items from our class store on Friday. Listed below are our classroom rules and consequences.

Classroom Rules

1. Follow directions the first time they are given.
2. Keep your hands, feet, and objects to yourself.
3. Raise your hand to speak.
4. Be seated quick and quietly.
5. Ask permission before leaving your seat.
6. Complete all assignments.
7. Be kind and respect others.

Consequences

Your child's name is written in the Discipline Book. Each time your child does not comply with one or more of the rules listed above, he/she will incur one of the following consequences listed below:

1. One Strike- Warning
2. Two Strikes- Lose 10 minutes of social time during lunch or recess.
3. Three Strikes- Lose all social time during lunch or recess.
4. Four Strikes- Contact parent/note home

Your child will be given a fresh start every day.